

CLAIMS

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1. (Amended) A method for facilitating online payment transactions between participants in a network-based transaction facility, the method comprising:

communicating information to a first participant via a communications network, the information identifying a plurality of payment instruments available for processing online payment transactions in the network-based transaction facility;

receiving payment option information from the first participant via the communications network, the payment option information indicating a willingness of the first participant to accept payments from a second participant via at least one of the plurality of payment instruments;

communicating the payment option information to the second participant via the communications network;

performing a risk analysis pertaining to an online payment transaction between the first participant and the second participant to determine whether the second participant is qualified to use a payment instrument selected by the second participant from the at least one payment instrument acceptable to the first participant; and

accepting personal billing information concerning the selected payment instrument if the second participant is qualified to use the selected payment instrument, the personal billing information being accepted via the communications network to facilitate the online payment transaction between the first participant and the second participant.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
dynamically evaluating risk involved in the online payment transaction  
between the first participant and the second participant; and  
restricting the online payment transaction based on the evaluated risk.
3. The method of claim 2 wherein the involved risk is evaluated using various  
information concerning the first participant and the second participant, the various  
information including information stored by an online payment service and  
information obtained from any one of a plurality of third party risk analysis  
providers via the communications network.
4. The method of claim 2 wherein the involved risk is evaluated at various  
stages of the online payment transaction between the first participant and the second  
participant.
5. The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
accepting multiple payments issued to the first participant in a course of  
business transactions conducted by the first participant;  
accumulating the multiple payments over a period of time as a single  
accumulated payment; and  
disbursing the single accumulated payment to the first participant.
6. The method of claim 5 wherein the multiple payments are accepted over the  
communications network using the plurality of payment instruments.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the network-based transaction facility comprises a network-based auction facility.

8. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

communicating the personal billing information of the second participant to a financial institution to process the online payment transaction, the personal billing information being communicated over the communications network; and

notifying the first participant when the online payment transaction completes.

9. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

enabling the first participant to initiate the online payment transaction via communications network;

communicating to the first participant an invoice form interface to obtain invoice information from the first participant;

determining that the first participant is qualified to initiate the online payment transaction described by terms included in the invoice information; and  
passing the invoice information to the second participant.

10. (Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

enabling the second participant to initiate the online payment transaction via communications network;

communicating to the first participant information indicating a willingness of the second participant to use at least one of the plurality of payment instruments; and

providing a billing information interface to the second participant to obtain personal billing information concerning the at least one of the plurality of payment instruments if the second participant is qualified to use the at least one of the plurality of payment instruments.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the personal billing information is encrypted.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein the personal billing information of the second participant is not disclosed to the first participant unless permitted by the second participant.

13. (Amended) A system for facilitating online payment transactions between participants in a network-based transaction facility, the system comprising:

the network-based transaction facility to implement a transaction system that facilitates business transactions between a user and a further user;

a client, coupled to the network-based transaction facility, to present

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information identifying a plurality of payment instruments available for processing online payment transactions pertaining to corresponding business transactions and to communicate payment option information of the user over a communications network, the payment option information indicating a willingness of the user to accept a payment from the further user via at least one of the plurality of payment instruments; and

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an online payment service, coupled to the network-based transaction facility and the client via the communications network, to receive the payment option information from the client, to make the payment option information available to the further user via the communications network, to enable the further user to select a preferred payment instrument from the at least one of the payment instruments acceptable to the user, to determine whether the further user is qualified to use the preferred payment instrument based on a risk analysis pertaining to an online payment transaction between the first participant and the second participant, and to accept personal billing information concerning the preferred payment instrument from the further user via the communications network if the further user is qualified to use the preferred payment instrument.

14. (Amended) The system of claim 13 wherein the online payment service comprises:

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a risk management system to dynamically evaluate risk involved in the online payment transaction between the user and the further user; and

a payment processing system to restrict the online payment transaction based on the evaluated risk.

15. (Amended) The system of claim 14 wherein the involved risk is evaluated using various information concerning the user and the further user, the various information including information stored by an online payment service and information obtained from any one of a plurality of third party risk analysis providers via the communications network.

16. (Amended) The system of claim 14 wherein the involved risk is evaluated at various stages of the online payment transaction between the user and the further user.

17. (Amended) The system of claim 13 wherein the online payment service is further configured to

accept multiple payments issued to the user in a course of business transactions conducted by the user;

accumulate the multiple payments over a period of time as a single

accumulated payment, and

disburse the single accumulated payment to the user.

18. The system of claim 17 wherein the multiple payments are accepted over the communications network using the plurality of payment instruments.

19. The system of claim 13 wherein the network-based transaction facility comprises a network-based auction facility.

20. (Amended) The system of claim 13 wherein the online payment service is configured to

communicate the personal billing information of the further user to a financial institution to process the online payment transaction, the personal billing information being communicated over the communications network, and

notify the user when the online payment transaction completes.

21. (Amended) The system of claim 13 wherein the online payment service is configured to

enable the user to initiate the online payment transaction via communications network.

communicate to the user an invoice form interface to obtain invoice information from the user,

determine that the user is qualified to initiate the online payment transaction described by terms included in the invoice information, and pass the invoice information to the further user.

22. (Amended) The system of claim 13 wherein the online payment service is configured to

enable the further user to initiate the online payment transaction via communications network,

communicate to the user information indicating a willingness of the further user to use at least one of the plurality of payment instruments, and

provide a billing information interface to the further user to obtain personal billing information concerning the at least one of the plurality of payment instruments if the further user is qualified to use the at least one of the plurality of payment instruments.

23. The system of claim 13 wherein the personal billing information is encrypted.



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24. (Amended) The system of claim 13 wherein the personal billing information of the further user is not disclosed to the user unless permitted by the further user.

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25. (Amended) A machine-readable medium comprising instructions, which when executed on a machine, cause the machine to perform a method for facilitating online payment transactions between participants in a network-based transaction facility, the method comprising:

communicating information to a first participant via a communications network, the information identifying a plurality of payment instruments available for processing online payment transactions in the network-based transaction facility;

receiving payment option information from the first participant via the communications network, the payment option information indicating a willingness of the first participant to accept payments from a second participant via at least one of the plurality of payment instruments;

communicating the payment option information to the second participant via the communications network;

performing a risk analysis pertaining to an online payment transaction between the first participant and the second participant to determine whether the second participant is qualified to use a payment instrument selected by the second participant from the at least one payment instrument acceptable to the first

participant; and

accepting personal billing information concerning the selected payment instrument if the second participant is qualified to use the selected payment instrument, the personal billing information being accepted via the communications network to facilitate the online payment transaction between the first participant and the second participant.